S. HRG. 100-827

U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSUMER

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDREDTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

S. 2381 and H.R. 4419

TO AUTHORIZE APPROPRIATIONS FOR ACTIVITIES UNDER THE FEDERAL FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL ACT OF 1974

JUNE 22, 1988

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U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 1988

U.S. SENATE,
CONSUMER SUBCOMMITTEE,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, D. C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 p.m., in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Albert Gore, Jr. (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Staff members assigned to this hearing: Kevin Curtin and Linda Lance, staff counsels; and Mark Farrell, minority professional staff member.

OPENING STATEMENT BY SENATOR GORE

Senator GORE. The hearing will come to order.

I welcome all of our guests to this hearing on the authorization for the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

This morning, we will be receiving testimony regarding the activities of the U.S. Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy.

The United States has one of the worst fire records of any industrialized nation in the world. Each year, more than 6,000 individuals lose their lives to fire and millions of dollars in property damage is caused by fire and arson.

Partly in response to fire losses, the U.S. Fire Administration and National Fire Academy were established to assist states and local firefighters in promoting fire prevention and control.

In the past few years, the Reagan Administration has proposed reductions in funding for the Fire Administration and the Fire Academy. This year, the Administration suggested eliminating the Office of Fire Prevention and Arson Control and significantly reducing the travel stipend program. These continued assaults on our national fire effort are, in my view, short-sighted and do not demonstrate sufficient concern for our citizen's safety or sufficient awareness of the fact that, in the long run, we will save large sums of money if we bring our Nation into line with those other nations around the world that have found effective ways to prevent fire losses and casualties.

Programs such as smoke detector campaigns, residential sprinkler programs, and research on improvements in firefighter protective clothing are but a few of the activities of the Fire Administration which deserve recognition and our support.

We are very pleased to have with us this morning the head of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, the Hon. Curt Weldon, as well as Mr. Clyde Bragdon, the Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration, and Mr. Bill Neville, the Superintendent of the National Fire Academy.

Also with us today is a representative of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. I am pleased to have Chief Frank Baker from the Memphis, Tennessee, Fire Department here.

So, let me again welcome these witnesses and our guests. I look forward to the testimony.

But before we begin that, I want to recognize my friend and colleague, and Ranking Republican Member of our subcommittee, Senator John McCain.

OPENING STATEMENT BY SENATOR McCAIN

Senator McCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for making this hearing possible this morning on the reauthorization of this very important program, the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act.

I would also like to welcome my friend and former colleague from the House, Representative Curt Weldon, who, I would suggest, has more credentials on this issue than any man in both the House and Senate. I think the testimony that he will provide us today will be very helpful.

As we know, he is a former volunteer firefighter, fire chief. He has done everything, I think, but start a fire.

We appreciate the leadership that he has shown in forming the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.

Curt, we are looking forward to hearing from you.

I am pleased that the committee is convening this hearing on the reauthorization of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act.

Fire is a national problem. Each year, fire kills an estimated 6,000 people, injures another 100,000, and destroys property worth more than $9 billion. The very young and the elderly suffer the most. They are twice as likely to die in a fire than other Americans. Fire deaths are also disproportionately high among blacks and Native Americans. Tragically, many of these deaths could be avoided.

Mr. Chairman, lastly, I would like to explore at this hearing the adequacy of warning devices to alert the hearing impaired to the presence of a fire. Perhaps our friend, Congressman Weldon, might be able to mention that.

With a current population of 21 million hearing-impaired Americans, I think we have to do everything we can to insure that adequate systems exist to warn everyone of a fire.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to the testimony of today's witnesses.

Senator GORE. Thank you and without objection, the opening statement of Senator Ernest Hollings, the Chairman of our full Committee, will appear after the bills in the record.

[The bills and statement follow:]

II

100TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2381

To authorize appropriations for activities under the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 12 (legislative day, MAY 9), 1988

Mr. GORE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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A BILL

To authorize appropriations for activities under the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 17 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2216) is amended by adding at the end thereof the following:

"(g) Except as otherwise specifically provided with respect to the payment of claims under section 11 of this Act, to carry out the purposes of this Act, there are authorized to be appropriated $17,039,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1989, $17,737,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1990, and $18,464,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1991.".

O

100TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4419

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 25 (legislative day, MAY 18), 1988
Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

AN ACT

To authorize appropriations for activities under the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 17 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2216) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(g)(1) Except as otherwise specifically provided with respect to the payment of claims under section 11 of this Act, there are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the purposes of this Act—

"(A) $17,039,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1989;

"(B) $17,737,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1990; and

"(C) $18,464,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1991.

"(2) Of the amounts referred to in paragraph (1), not more than $4,150,000 is authorized to be appropriated for each fiscal year for National Emergency Training Center site administration.".

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

I am pleased that the Consumer Subcommittee is holding this hearing today, since I believe that reauthorization of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 is vitally important. Millions of destructive fires in the United States annually cause a tragic loss in lives and property damage. This is simply too large a problem to be left to the states and local governments to fight alone.

Since the publication of "America Burning" in 1973, the importance of the Federal Government's involvement in fire prevention and control has been demonstrated. Through such programs as smoke detector research, anti-arson activities, residential sprinkler system retrofit projects, and training of firefighting personnel, the Federal Government lends valuable assistance to the state and local efforts to combat fire and arson.

The hearings this morning afford an opportunity to reaffirm the Congress' support for the federal fire effort and to examine the proposed reductions in funding for these activities. I look forward to the testimony of the witnesses.

Senator GORE. We are ready to hear from you, Congressman Weldon, and welcome.

STATEMENT OF HON. CURT WELDON, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE SEVENTH DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Mr. WELDON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator McCain. I appreciate those kind comments.

It is a real honor for me to be here before you today.

I would ask unanimous consent if I could submit my formal comments for the record.

Senator GORE. Without objection.

Mr. WELDON. I would simply give you some overview thoughts that I have on this very vital and important issue.

I guess, first of all, I should start out by applauding each of you. The fire service recognizes the leadership role that you have taken in working for the interests of the fire service over the last several years, when times have not been so good and when attempts have been made to zero out the U.S. Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy, something which, in a bipartisan way, many of us totally oppose.

Your leadership has been recognized and we, who are both in the fire service and in the process of legislating in the other body and in the Senate appreciate your leadership.

I also would like to mention that you were two of the first Members of the Senate to join the Congressional Fire Services Caucus. By way of background, the caucus that we formed in December to support in a proactive way the issues relating to fire and life safety in America has become, in four or five short months, the fourth largest caucus on Capitol Hill. We currently have 195 Members of Congress that have joined us, including 28 from the Senate.

Once again, your leadership has helped get that off the ground, and has helped us to highlight issues of importance to fire safety officials in America and here in Washington.

By way of background, I would not be here today were it not for the fire service. I grew up in a fire service family, a volunteer organization, and eventually became chief and president of my fire company and Director of Training for a large county. I then entered the political realm, where I was a mayor for five years, chairman of a large county of 600,000 for five years, and then a Member of the 100th Congress, starting in 1987.

Issues relating to fire safety and the fire service have been very close to me all of my life, and I feel very strongly about the need for we here in Washington to support the very meager and modest request that the fire service has at the Federal level.

The administration, has unfortunately attempted to zero out both the Fire Academy and the Fire Administration I think not realizing the tremendous damage that this could cause throughout America.

When we think of fire safety and the fire service in America, we think of putting fires out and preventing fires. But if you look at mainstream America, the fire service means so much more than that.

If you look at every municipality, every town, every rural village, the one cohesive group that has been there, almost since our country was founded, is oftentimes the volunteer fire department. These are the same people who run the parades, the same people who put on the festivities to keep the social fabric and the community together.

We at all levels of government have to do whatever is possible to make sure that those people, providing such unselfish service, have the resources to continue to serve their communities, their states, and our Nation.

The 1.2 million people who are in the fire service nationwide do not ask for much. They are not asking for Federal handouts. They are not asking for large, new, spending programs. They are simply asking for a recognition of the job they are doing and the resources that cannot be provided at the state and local level. That is where the Fire Administration and the Fire Academy come into play.

I have had the experience over the last year and a half, by way of comparison, of being a Member of the House Armed Services and the Merchant Marine Committees. On the Armed Services Committee, I sit on the Sea Power Subcommittee, and have been very active on the issue of fire protection for naval personnel on board our ships.

As a result of a hearing that we had on the House side in October and actions on the Senate side at that same point in time, we were able to immediately get $64 million reprogrammed for shipboard naval fire protection, turnout gear, and protective equipment for the men who serve on board our combatant ships.

In contrast, that $64 million would be the entire budget for the fire service in this country for almost four years. This action to deal with fire protection issues, which I have been an active advocate for, for our navy personnel was extremely important. But, by way of comparison, the fire service has had to scrimp and scrape, just to keep its head above water, for the meager sums that we have appropriated over the years, under an administration that has consistently tried to zero out all funding.

The purpose of the caucus was to try to highlight the issues of importance to the fire service and to ask for the support of the Committees and the Members to provide the resources for our fire service nationwide.

The bill that you have before you I totally and enthusiastically support. The funding levels that you have provided are exactly what is needed, no less and at this time no more. The increases that you provided are reasonable, and, certainly, in light of our current fiscal situation, appropriate.

The efforts that you have provided in the Senate bill, in comparison to the House version that we passed earlier, deal with the issue of reinstating the travel stipends program for those people trying to get to the Fire Academy in Emmitsburg. The funding levels that you have appropriated and authorized also provide for restoration of the fire prevention and arson control operation, a very vital, necessary function that we cannot let go by the wayside.

I applaud each of you and this entire Subcommittee for having the foresight to restore both of those vital programs in your funding levels.

I do have a concern that was addressed in the House that I would ask you to consider here and that is a provision that Congressmen Doug Walgren and Sherwood Boehlert, who were two of the leaders in the House on fire service issues, long before I got here, put into the House bill relating to the appropriation of funds for site administration at the Fire Academy.

In the testimony that was given in the House before Congressman Walgren's subcommittee, there were questions raised about some positions, some funds that had been provided for Fire Academy functions; yet, because the Fire Academy comes under the jurisdiction of FEMA, these positions were, in fact, being used for emergency management functions and not fire service functions.

This is something that we can't accept because the amount of funds for the Fire Academy and for fire training purposes are so limited that we just cannot afford to have any of those funds being diverted for any other purpose.

The one provision that is in the House version would address that issue. It sets a cap on the amount of money that can be appropriated for site administration. I believe you will find that it is totally supported by the fire service in America, and I think it will send a clear signal to FEMA that we want the funds that are being appropriated for the Fire Academy and the Fire Administration to be used for that purpose and nothing else.

I also had bill language put into the House Military Construction Subcommittee, on which I sit, relating to FEMA's funding, that requires FEMA to have a full accounting for the positions at the Emergency Management Institute and the Fire Academy, to make sure that funds are not being used for the wrong purpose or even being used at cross purposes.

This is a very important issue. I think it is one that you will hear about from some of the other witnesses. I would ask that you consider this in your legislation as well, so that this bill can go through cleanly without having this be a conference item.

I would appreciate your assistance in that effort.

In summation, I would like to say, once again, that I appreciate your leadership. We have just begun to scratch the surface of things that we can do to act as advocates for the fire service in America.

Once again, the people in the fire service are not asking for special interest programs. They are not asking for hand-outs. They are not asking for massive Federal intervention. What they are asking for is a recognition of the job that they are doing, provision of the resources, and the coordination to allow them to continue to support their hometown communities, whether they be paid or volunteer firefighters.

And, with the cooperation of the two of you and this entire Subcommittee, and with the efforts of our Fire Services Caucus, I think we can keep the awareness up and make sure that we are being responsive to the needs the fire service has across the country.

With that, I will end my informal comments and answer any questions that any of you might have.

Senator GORE. Thank you very much for taking the time to get us off to a good start, Curt.

It has been my experience that the firefighters in the local communities around the country are not able to come and get the safety training and other training provided if they don't have the travel stipend. For people who are not aware of the program and familiar with how it operates, they may see that as an unnecessary expense that can be eliminated. But for a firefighter whose life is saved as a result of the safety training received, it is certainly essential.

Based on your experience in the fire service, how do you rate the value of enabling these firefighters to come and get this training?

Mr. WELDON. It is absolutely imperative that we provide the support that is contained in this legislation, to allow firefighters across America to travel to Emmitsburg. Many of our states have very aggressive fire training efforts. But all of the states support the type of training that is done at Emmitsburg, and all of the states want to send members of their fire service organizations to Emmitsburg to receive this quality training that oftentimes cannot be provided across America or at the state training institutions.

Without travel stipends, it is going to be virtually impossible to have anyone who lives any distance away from Emmitsburg come in for that training. It is enough that we are asking, in many cases, for volunteers to give up time from work, to take off a week or a weekend, away from their family, to travel there with no pay, and yet not provide any remuneration.

But they are not asking for that. All they are asking for is the ability to have reimbursement to get to and from Emmitsburg.

So it is absolutely vital. It is essential. I think it was very shortsighted and narrow-minded to attempt to cut that out.

I think it is a case where perhaps those in the administration who were proposing that really did not understand what impact that would have on the fire service in America.

Senator GORE. Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Curt, for a very impressive statement. As I said before, I know of no one in Congress who is more qualified to address this issue. It is a very important one. We have a tendency to forget, when we talk about the mechanics, the human tragedies, that somewhere in America, there is a fire taking place as we speak and someone is either being severely injured or dying as a result of this tragedy.

Your efforts I think are very important. I think your testimony has certainly contributed a great deal to my understanding of the issue.

Thank you very much for being here.

Mr. WELDON. Thank you.

I appreciate it.

Senator GORE. Thank you very much.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF HON. CURT WELDON, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before this subcommittee and commend you on your leadership role in support of our nation's fire service. I would also like to thank Senator McCain, who has expressed his support for the fire service on several occasions. If it were not for you and other senators and congressmen sympathetic to the needs of the fire service, our nation's fire problem would be much worse than it is today. I recently testified before the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee and the House Appropriations Subcommittee on this same Authorization, and am honored to appear before you today.

I come before you today as a former volunteer firefighter, fire Chief, Certified Fire Protection Specialist, and Director of Fire Training for a county of 78 fire companies. I have lectured around the country on fire issues, and while working for INA Corporation, developed their national program for training fire protection specialists, arson investigators, and other technical professionals dealing with the fire problem nationwide. More recently, I formed the Congressional Fire Services Caucus to address the needs of our nation's fire service on an ongoing basis. I am pleased to announce that you, Mr. Chairman and Senator McCain were among the first to join this bipartisan Caucus, which has grown in just six months to become the fourth largest Caucus on Capitol Hill.

Mr. Chairman, I would probably not be in public office today if it were not for my involvement with the volunteer fire service. As a local mayor, county commissioner, and now U.S. Congressman I have sought to make government officials at every level more sensitive to the needs of the fire service. We lose 6000 lives and $?0 billion in property to fire each year. The absolute need for the basic resources required to protect our local communities from the threat of fire and other disasters has been a major focus throughout my public and private life.

As you know, this Administration, through OMB and FEMA, has repeatedly attempted to zero out critical fire program funds. The fire programs called for by the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of ?974 represent the minimum federal commitment needed to sustain the current level of fire protection in America. OMB has proposed the elimination of the Office of Fire Prevention and Arson Control and the Travel Stipend Program. In past years these programs have increased firefighters' access to valuable information and helped them to manage the fire problem in a cost effective manner.

Looking back over the past 210 years, the fire service as an institution has been critical to maintaining public safety and security. Every village, every town, every city, was protected against fire by volunteers -- individuals who fought to protect the lives and property of their families and friends without regard for their own safety. Even today, throughout America 80% of our fire service is made up of men and women who volunteer their time and endanger their lives to protect their community.

The federal government has a very definite role to play in fire safety. The U.S. Fire Administration was created by Congress in 1974 by the Act we are discussing today. Its mission is to provide support for our nation's fire service in four basic areas: data collection, public education and awareness, research, and training.

Mr. Chairman, I have some serious concerns regarding whether or not the intent of Congress pursuant to the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 has been carried out in recent years. Specifically, I refer to the site administration policy at the National Emergency Training Center at Emmitsburg, Maryland. While I understand the purpose behind a centralized Office of Training, to coordinate the fire programs with the emergency management programs, I believe the fire programs have been given a low priority under this structure. It appears evident that the few dollars Congress has appropriated for fire programs have been siphoned off or reallocated to inappropriate emergency management programs and positions. It was never the intent of Congress to subordinate any one program to another when it created the Federal Emergency Management Agency. However, the U.S. Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy have now been placed so far down the FEMA organizational ladder that they are in danger of extinction.

Mr. Chairman, I respectfully request that this Subcommittee adopt similar language to that of the House Science, Space and Technology Committee under H.R. 4479 regarding the site administration policy at the National Emergency Training Center. It is critical that the fire programs be protected and that the intent of Congress be carried out. With such limited resources, the fire programs must make every penny count, therefore, they ought to have control of their own pocketbook.

Thank you Mr. Chairman for this opportunity and I look forward to working with you and this Subcommittee in the future.

Senator GORE. We are going to call on our panel now: Mr. Clyde Bragdon, Jr., Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration at Emmitsburg, and Mr. William Neville, Superintendent of the National Fire Academy, also in Emmitsburg.

So, if the two of you would come forward, we would appreciate it.

Without objection, your full prepared statements will be put into the record in their entirety, and we invite you to summarize your testimony as you see fit.

We will start, Mr. Bragdon, with you.

Welcome, and please proceed.

STATEMENT OF HON. CLYDE A. BRAGDON, JR., ADMINISTRATOR, U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BRAGDON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator McCain.

My name is Clyde Bragdon, the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration.

Some 4 years ago, two weeks and two days, I sat in this very hearing room and was confirmed by the Senate for this position. It certainly has been a learning experience to me to reflect on fire with a national perspective.

I recognize the exemplary programs or the lack of programs, and the variety that we have, on a national basis.

I have a formal statement for the record, and I would like to paraphrase it as I go through it to highlight some items.

Mr. Chairman, you have had a unique or rare opportunity in the past several months, certainly, as you were a candidate for nomination to the highest office in this land, to interface and interact with the people, the citizens of this country, in a political sense.

I would suggest, perhaps, that one of the strong agendas that came forward was not fire. There is some commentary that can be made in that respect.

Have we, in this Nation, accepted our fate relative to fire and the devastation it provides? Why is not fire prevention a strong initiative throughout the Nation?

I am concerned, and I am sure from the opening statements of both the Chairman and Senator McCain, you support that. What are we lacking and what are we not doing to maintain an interest on something that does devastate our country on a national basis and a record that we should not be proud of as we sit in the world of nations?

I realize that among the issues that are economic and social in this country, this has a ranking order of low priority. Maybe fire occurs in such a small order every day, someplace, as Senator McCain has suggested, that it does not get the notoriety, except on such occasions as when we have a Dupont Plaza Hotel fire or a Beverly Hills Supper Club fire in Kentucky, or an MGM Grand fire, and then we have an inclination to forget very rapidly in this country and go on about our way.

We feel that the concern that was created relative to fire in this Nation was first addressed on a national basis at the Williamsburg Conference, hosted by the Johnson Wax Foundation of Racine, Wisconsin, in 1965, when national fire leaders got together and focused on what can we do about our fire problem on a national basis.

It was then that the first seeds were laid to create a Federal focus or a Federal presence in fire, not to replace the state and local responsibility where those service deliveries appropriately belong, but to serve as a catalyst, a clearing house, a coordinator, if you will, to use funds of the taxpayer in a collective sense, to do things that state and local governments, in and by themselves, are not able to do or have the responsibility to do, particularly on widespread initiatives, such as public education and fire research.

A result of that effort was an amendment, to the Fire Research Act of 1968, in which was recommended that there be a national commission created. This national commission was to conduct hearings throughout this land, and submit a report as they did when they were appointed in 1971, by then President Nixon—a report which has quite a bit of notoriety in the fire community, the report of "America Burning." This commission, was comprised of members of many disciplines, including many outside of the fire world itself, including, for example, the Secretary of HUD, the Secretary of Commerce, and ad-

visory Members from the Congress—two Members of the House, Congressman Davis, of Alabama and Jerry Pettis, of California, both since deceased, and Warren Magnuson and Ted Stevens of the Senate.

That report has served as a guideline or a bible for the American Fire Service with its 91 recommendations.

As an aside, because some time has passed since that report came out some 15 years ago, this past fall, we revisited "America Burning" by inviting in many people from many disciplines to reflect one more time on whether those initiatives were valid, have they been addressed, what new initiatives should be undertaken through the year 2000.

We find that the best investment we can make and the cheapest investment is a well informed public, public awareness. As we compare with the foreign experience, we find significantly they do not have the fire losses and fire tragedies that we do in this country. Much of it is relative to the attitude of our public that I reflected on earlier.

One of the recommendations of this report was to create a Federal focus, which was to be found in the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act, over which you have jurisdiction. That is a good document.

I would reflect, as I read it, that I would not change anything. I think, again, that the framers of that act respected the relationship between the Federal Government of a non-interference, but assistance, to build a capacity at the state and local level.

So, during this intervening period, we have seen significant change take place in our fire loss in this country—not that we should credit the Federal fire focus. What we should credit is the partnership that was created between the fire community, at the state and local level, and the Federal level, surely the interest groups as well, and the private sector.

If fire deaths are to be the measurement, we have seen a reduction from what was reported in the 12,000 to 13,000 range in the mid-sixties, to the time right now, where we are reflecting around 6,000 per year. Fire deaths also reflect the other kinds of losses as well.

But we have stalled. We have plateaued on that level, and we need to reflect and look at other initiatives to give ourselves another nudge and move away from that, such as the efforts that we have been making, particularly in terms of public education and awareness, and some of the reactive kind of systems that you referred to, such as residential sprinklers. The smoke detector undoubtedly was a major, significant factor in the reduction of fire losses in the last decade or so.

But we find through our own research and that of others that smoke detectors do exist in 75 percent of our homes and other residential environments, but about 50 percent of those are nonoperative.

This past two years, we have conducted a national campaign through a very respectable contractor of national notoriety, Ogilvie and Mather. We are working with the local communities to address smoke detection issues.

I am pleased to say—and these are verifiable data—that the contributions that we have had from the private sector and the media, both the print and electronic media, equate to about $52 million worth of advertising value in this campaign. We hope that this will have a positive effect.

So our emphasis will continue to be working partnerships with the private sector and other governmental units because they, collectively, will serve as the agent that can reduce the fires in this country.

I have referred throughout my written submission to many of the current programs and the value of those programs that are in operation and were projected to continue, but are proposed by the administration not to be funded in the future year.

Many of these programs have the kind of emphasis that I just mentioned in a very general sense.

We believe and continue to believe that the Federal Government should not interfere with the responsibilities of state and local government, but should serve, again, in that collective sense, to do the things that they, in and by themselves, cannot do.

When I speak to a total systematic approach to approaching fire, I am talking about the research, the public awareness, the technology advancements that have been made. I am speaking of the research that is done by the Center for Fire Research in the National Bureau of Standards, which is also a party to this act, and also of education in advancement of fire professionals at the National Fire Academy.

Obviously, having spent my lifetime working in this particular endeavor, I carry and will continue to carry the enthusiasm that we need to address and reduce this unacceptable problem in this country.

I realize that there are other witnesses and they do have other information to present here. We would be pleased to supply anything for the record that we have not provided.

Thank you, sir.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF CLYDE A. BRAGDON, JR., ADMINISTRATOR, U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Mr. Chairman, I am Clyde A. Bradgon, Jr., Administrator of the United States Fire Administration (USFA). It is a pleasure to appear before this Subcommittee today to discuss the reauthorization of programs under the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

By way of background, the stimulus for Federal involvement in fire prevention and control activities came from the President's National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, and the publication of their startling report, AMERICA BURNING. This dedicated blue ribbon Commission recommended establishment of a national fire administration and fire academy and presented a plan detailing how fire losses in America could be cut in half—in a decade. These recommendations were incorporated into the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act which the 93rd Congress passed in October of 1974.

While the Act established separate roles for the United States Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy (NFA), they share a common goal—to save lives and reduce losses from fires and related emergencies. The USFA works to accomplish this goal through programs and research and applied engineering projects and NFA works to accomplsh this goal through training and education.

As the U.S. Fire Administrator, I want to assure you that the programs and projects that the USFA completed in FY 87 and are working on in FY 88 are designed to continue our work to reduce fire deaths and losses. In 1974, a reported 12,000 to 13,000 citizens of the United States lost their lives to fire.

Preliminary analysis of 1987 data puts the number of fire deaths at approximatley 6,000.

We are very pleased with this reduction in fire deaths and feel that our efforts in the area of smoke detector research, fire prevention, anti-arson programs, support to the fire service in management and firefighter health and safety, increased knowledge of the fire prcblem through data collection and analysis and an increased public awareness brought about through very successful public fire education campaigns were, at least in part, responsible for this reduction. The work accomplished on the State, county, and municipal levels together with FEMA/USFA efforts on the Federal level was the key to this success.

Although the achievements are significant, we cannot rest on our past accomplishments. The record of destruction and loss of life from fire in the United States is still the worst among major industrialized nations. We have been at the 6,000 life loss level for a few years and we seem to have reached a plateau from which it is difficult to descend.

We are, however, exploring several cost-effective ways to attempt significant lowering of the fire death toll. Our FY 88 program plan, based on the groundwork laid in FY 87, positions FEMA/USFA working with the fire community and interest groups to accomplish a break through in this area in the near future.

In discusisons with your staff in preparation for this hearing, there was an indication that you wanted to discuss the FY 88 USFA programs, with emphasis on those programs under the jurisdiction of the Office of Fire Prevention and Arson Control. The five major program components in this Office and their accompanying projects are as follows:

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAM

Governor's Fire Safety Committee Support.
Local Fire prevention Partnership Projects.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS PROGRAMS

Targeted National Campaigns.
Emergency Education Network Teleconferences.
Sesame Street Fire Safety Project.
Wildlands/Urban Fire Interface Effort.

QUICK ACTING RESIDENTIAL SPRINKLER SYSTEM PROGRAM

Research and Development (multi-year ongoing).
Demonstrations: Trailers, Workshops and Retrofit (Department of Housing and Urban Development and People's Firehouse).
Information Development, Dissemination and Technical Assistance.

ANTI-ARSON INITIATIVES

Community-based Anti-Arson Support Grants.
Juvenile Firesetters Programs (Department of Justice).
Rural Arson Initiative.
Arson Information Management System (AIMS).
Urban Arson Strike Force Program.
Federal Arson Task Force.

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS

Center for Fire Research.
Operation Life Safety.
Building Codes and Standards.

I would like to point out for you a few of our more successful state and local programs supported by this Office. They are:

The Community Volunteer Fire Prevention Program.—This is a multi-year effort to enlist the active participation of states, local governments, the fire service, and the private sector in developing and conducting community-based education and prevention programs. The Program is directed at involving citizens in improving fire safety.

Federal assistance is provided to maintain the Governor's appointed committee for three years and local volunteer private sector organizations for 2 years. A key objective of the program is to encourage the institutionalization of these programs under State, local and private funding once Federal financial assistance ends. The Governor in each participating state appoints a state Fire Prevention Committee to manage the National Community Volunteer Fire Prevention Program (NCVFPP).

This program began in FY 85 with ten states and thirty local programs receiving financial assistance. Since its inception, the NCVFPP has supported 99 local projects in 29 states and the District of Columbia. Among the projects developed by the recipients are programs on arson prevention, juvenile firesetting, public fire education, and fire prevention.

A recent survey indicated that, more than a year after Federal funding has ceased for the first ten states in the program, the majority of the partnerships formed under the NCVFPP are continuing to conduct fire prevention activities using local resources. Overall, eighty percent of the state committees and the local projects continue to conduct fire prevention activities. It appears from this survey that fire prevention activities, based on community partnerships, can be institutionalized at both state and local levels, and that activities will continue after Federal funding has been completed.

The Residential Sprinkler Retrofit Projects.—Since its inception, the USFA has conducted studies, research and development, testing, demonstrations, and information development and dissemination activities aimed at the utilization of residential sprinklers. Among our successful sprinkler projects is our demonstration program aimed at retrofitting older, urban housing with the quick-acting sprinkler technology. Through a cooperative agreement with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and its prime contractor, the National Association of Home Builders Research Foundation (NAHB/RF), the USTA is retrofitting multi-family and single-family assisted housing with the quick-acting residential sprinkler systems.

NAHF/RF is designing each system to conform to local codes and standards as well as the specific design constrains of each building. Working with the local fire service and the building and development sectors, USFA hopes to encourage continued involvement by the private sector in retrofitting sprinklers during the rehabilitation activities.

Two recent fires, both important for different reasons occurred—one on the East Coast and another on the West Coast. I am referring to the Los Angeles office high rise fire and the fire that occurred in Speaker Wright's office. Both of these fires suggest strong reasons for providing automatic fire sprinkler protection as part of a balanced fire protection design in buildings frequented by the public.

One of the many projects that the USFA is involved in has attracted the interest of the Architect of the Capitol. The Center for Fire Research and USFA are conducting a series of controlled burns to study behavior and movement of smoke in a multi-storied building. The Architect of the Capitol has joined with CFR and USFA in conducting these tests in the old Capitol Hill Police Station in August of this year.

Building owners at three sites, Boston, Massachusetts, St. Louis, Missouri, and Prince Georges County, Maryland, where projects are completed, have already

begun new retrofit projects totally with private sector funds. Additionally multiple-family projects being completed are in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and Austin, Texas.

Single-family public sponsored housing retrofits are programmed for Denver, Colorado, Tallahassee, Florida, Seattle, Washington, and Reynoldsburg, Ohio. The insurance savings alone at the Boston project will recover the cost of the sprinkler installation in five years.

The USFA has been successful in achieving life safety sprinkler installations in renovated properties. A project was completed in Brooklyn, New York where sprinklers were placed in city-owned dwellings meant to serve the homeless and battered women. In San Francisco, California, a property has been renovated which serves a predominantly Chinese community. Projects such as these demonstrate how community based organizations can become successfully involved in building fire safety into renovation planning.

The Public Education and Awareness Campaign.—During FY 87/88, the USFA expanded its campaigns to increase national awareness of fire safety issues. The first campaign undertaken was a Smoke Detector Installation and Maintenance Campaign urging the public to install smoke detectors and then to maintain them by monthly and yearly battery replacements. The second campaign, Partnerships Against Fire, helps fire departments and community leaders to broaden local involvement in fire safety programs. The USFA information kits for both of these campaigns feature media guidelines, press lists and releases, feature activities, camera-ready artwork, and pre-scripted radio public service announcements. These kits were sent to fire departments, fire service organizations and community organizations nationwide.

As we speak, a teleconference on the Partnership program is being broadcast from our National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Maryland. We have had Members of Congress interested in providing information about the teleconference to their fire communities and hope to be able to make this information available to the members of the Congressional Fire Service Caucus on a regular basis. The Partnership Against Fire teleconference will be followed in July by a teleconference on the USFA's Sesame Street Fire Safety Project.

To date, these two campaigns have reached over 75 million Americans. The media exposure from national radio broadcasts, feature articles in local newspapers, and national publications amounted to more than $50 million in free advertising. We are reaching great numbers of people, especially the high risk populations such as Hispanics, blacks, seniors, and children. We cannot affort to be passive in spreading the message of fire safety in light of the national fire problem.

In FY 88, we will be launching three new targeted campaigns, the first of these is fire safety for rural residents. Our focus in this campaign will be on the misuse of alternative home heating devices. This problem is particularly acute in rural populations. Two additional campaigns will target arson and promote a system approach to home fire safety.

The widespread acceptance of our public education and awareness efforts to date can be attributed to the positive responses of the fire service, local community groups and the private sector.

By way of example, let me mention two private sector efforts that were very successful.

The McDonald's Corporation, in conjunction with the National Broadcasting Corporation and the USFA, carried out a nationwide "Plan To Get Out Alive" program during national fire prevention week in October, 1987. This campaign, which included television and print materials, reached over 125 million people. The value of advertising furnished by the private sector in this campaign was in excess of $1 million.

BRK-Pittway, the producer of First Alert Smoke Detectors, in conjunction with the USFA, distributed home fire safety brochures in 300,000 smoke detector packages sold during last year's holiday season. The USFA will continue to work with these two corporations and others to achieve better public-private cooperation for national fire safety.

The Community-Based Anti-Arson Organization.—Since 1984, the USFA has funded local housing and community organizations to carry out targeted anti-arson projects. Local community groups are a valuable asset in the mitigation of arson related fires. These groups have a particular vested interest in the preservation of their neighborhoods and housing stock. A major focus of these Community Based Organizations (CBO's) has been to alleviate the conditions which provide a fertile environment for arson. Among these conditions are deteriorated and vacant housing, lack of awareness of the causes of arson, isolation and fear among tenants and the absence of strategies to prevent arson.

The USFA is near completion of an effort for the design and testing of an instrument which CBO's may use to evaluate success against arson. Preliminary information indicates that in some neighborhoods the community anti-arson programs are showing positive results. For example, in one CBO in Brooklyn, New York, more than 30 tenant associations have been organized in buildings where arson was either directly threatened or conditions were ripe for arson. We are encouraged by the results gained by USFA's modest investments in community-based programs.

The above four project descriptions are excellent examples of the success that the USFA is having in working with States, local government, community groups and the private sector. Before discussing the FY 89 budget, I would like to cite a few other examples of success which have been achieved in other USFA program areas.

America Burning Revisited.—The National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control presented its recommendations in 1973 for a fire-safe America. Since that time, the Commission's report, "America Burning" has served well as the blueprint for improving America's fire safety and much has been accomplished. Annual fire losses have been cut significantly over the past decade. But the losses remain staggering, as I noted earlier, and these losses demand our continued attention.

The USFA felt it appropriate, therefore to examine both the results of the past twelve years and to identify the emergency fire issues needing attention until the beginning of the 21st century. The USFA sponsored this symposium which involved fire safety officials as well as leaders of professional, educational, governmental and business organizations. A two and a half day meeting of 70 participants was held in December 1987, in Tysons Corner, Virginia.

The problems indentified were so pervasive that some are continuing to exist. These problems need either additional work or new approaches. In some cases, new problems have developed over the past decade. The overriding priority problem identified by all of the work groups was the need to motivate the citizens toward more fire-safe behavior. Some of the major concerns identified included our failure to convince elected officials of the depth and breadth of the fire problem, our need to improve firefighter health and safety especially because of the more hostile, toxic fires experienced, our need to expand the national data system to fill major information gaps and our need to improve fire training and edcuation particularly for fire officers.

The problems identified and the strategies suggested are currently being reviewed by the participants. A conference report will be available this Fall and we will share it with this Subcommittee and other interested parties.

The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).—The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) continues to attract a steady increase in the number of reporting fire departments (in excess of 13,000 in 1986). At present, fire departments in 40 states are reporting to NFIRS via the National Fire Information Council.

In 1986, the fire incident reports generated by the particiapting jurisdictions totaled more than 1 million. This collection of fire incident specific data gives the USFA the only tool of its kind to analyze the Nation's fire experience and resultant loss of life and property. These reports constitute an immeasurable and invaluable contribution to the understanding and ability of the Nation's fire service and State fire officials to identify the causes and consequences of fire in this Nation each year. The in-kind value of the voluntary participation of the NFIRS departments in 1986 has been estimated to exceed $10 million.

Hazardous/Chemical Emergencies Research.—The Office of Firefighter Health and Safety continues to sponsor research and development in this critical area in conjunction with other Federal agencies and State and local governments. Let me cite three examples briefly:

Project Firesmoke is being carried out through an interagency agreement with the National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH). This project involves monitoring the performance of the firefighter's self-contained breathing apparatus at actual fires. The cities of Pittsburgh, New York, Boston, Phoenix, and San Antonio as well as the Pennsylvania State Fire Training Academy are participating directly in this program.

The USFA is evaluating prototype chemical protective clothing and equipment in Memphis, Phoenix, Miami and New York City fire departments as part of its continuing effort to provide emergency response personnel with the optimum protection against the widest possible range of toxic chemicals.

Another project dealing with chemical emergencies is our ongoing firefighter mortality study. This epidemiological study concerning the incidence of firefighter cancer is being conducted by the Harborview Medical Center, University of Washington with local communities such as Kent County, Bellevue, Tacoma, Portland

and Seattle. The study compares the causes of death of the study group with a similar group of police officers from the same jurisdictions to identify the effect of toxic exposures.

The USFA is sponsoring an information gathering workshop on communicable diseases with emphasis on AIDS next month at the National Emergency Training Center. The objective of this workshop is to exchange information, develop a better understanding of the risks involved and to disseminate this information to the fire service community.

We have invited individuals to the workshop from various fields of endeavor who have something to contribute to the knowledge base including representatives of the fire and medical professions and particularly, representatives of jurisdictions with exemplary programs.

The FY 89 program envisioned by the USFA will consist of programs and projects in the following areas.

Firefighter Health and Safety.—This office will continue to perform testing and research to improve firefighter protection when operating at fire and chemical emergencies. This office will perform studies and publish results aimed at enhancing the safety of personnel during emergency operations.

Fire Data and Analysis.—This office will continue the operation of the National Fire Incident Reporting System and will perform special studies aimed at identifying trends in fire losses.

Policy and Coordination.—This office will provide the overall national fire focus for the fire services.

Finally, in the FY 89 budget for the USFA, the Administration has requested an appropriation of $2,657,000. This amount includes $350,000 for Policy and coordination; $400,000 for Firefighter Health and Safety; $900,000 for Fire Data and Analysis; and $200,000 for National Emergency Training Center Site Administration; and $807,000 for salaries and expenses.

The FY 89 Budget Request represents a decrease of $3,145,000 and four staff years, thereby eliminating the Office of Fire Prevention and Arson Control. It is the Administration's position that it is now appropriate for the State and local governments and the private sector to sustain the programs that have heretofore functioned to this point in partnership with the Federal government.

Senator GORE. Thank you very much.

As I mentioned, your entire statement will be included.

Before we go to questions, we will hear from Mr. William Neville, Superintendent of the National Fire Academy.

Welcome and please proceed.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM M. NEVILLE, JR., SUPERINTENDENT, NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY

Mr. NEVILLE. Thank you, Senator Gore, Senator McCain. I am very pleased to be here.

I am appearing before you to ask for authorization of appropriations for Fiscal Year 1989 for training activities authorized under the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act.

The amount requested in the President's budget is $10,028,000, which is nearly identical to last year's request, and will reflect a reduction in student travel stipends.

It is truly an honor for me to report on the continuing role of the Fire Academy in furthering fire safety through training and education. The first class was held on the Emmitsburg campus in 1979, and at this point, we have had over 28,000 students on that campus.

Our delivery system, however, goes beyond our resident program. In cooperation with state and local fire training programs, we have a very active field training effort in which we are now reaching over 65,000 firefighters throughout the country each year.

We cooperate with universities across the country in an open learning program, which allows firefighters to gain baccalaureate degrees, which would be almost impossible for many of them under different circumstances because they live too far from the universities or their particular working shift makes it impossible to be involved in a normal program.

We also deliver training through FEMA's EENET television program.

One of my personal priorities upon assuming this position in late 1986 was to improve volunteer participation.

While about half the people that attend our training activities off campus are volunteers, less than percent of those who attend courses on campus are volunteers. Our research led us to believe that if we could somehow shorten our normal two week classes, we could get better participation by the volunteers.

This year, we are running two pilot programs of one week duration, in which the volunteers travel on Saturday and start training on a Sunday morning, completing course work the following Friday. We will reach about 200 volunteers this year in the pilot program and, assuming that we get affirmative responses, we will improve that number over the following years.

In addition to that, we make our campus available to States on weekends, this year to 18 state training programs, and next year 25 have requested that effort. We believe we will be able to meet those requests.

We are also taking our normal two week classes to the field, particularly in response to SARATitle III training requests. We have taken both our hazardous materials tactics class and our chemistry class on the road and are now in the process of providing instructional training for the chemistry course. We believe that we will have around 100 instructors available throughout the country by the end of this fiscal year.

Next year, we are producing, again for field delivery, three new courses. The one that I will discuss is a health and safety course for firefighters, which includes such topics as how to protect the firefighters when they are dealing with patients with AIDS.

While our off campus effort is increasing, we have, to this date, not had to sacrifice our residential program.

This year, we will offer 160 classes to approximately 4,000 students.

This year, we are also graduating our first Executive Fire Officer Program class. These people are required to take four courses, usually one per year, at the Academy, which receive both graduate and upper level credit at universities across the country. No less than 25 percent of their time in studies here must be dedicated to the fire prevention aspect of fire protection.

Another success story, I believe, and a fine example of cooperation between Federal and local agencies is the CAMEO program, Computer Assisted Management of Emergency Operations. This was developed by

the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Coast Guard, and with a great deal of assistance from the Seattle Fire Department.

This program is specifically designed for first responders, to assist them in dealing with hazardous materials situations at the scene.

We hope to reach about 250 students this year. The demand is increasing at such a rapid rate that we will restrict ourselves next year to preparing people to teach the course. In other words, it is a "instructor training" type of operation.

We have also, for the first time last year, and again this year been bringing community chief executive officers—mayors and city managers—on the campus, together with fire chiefs, in an effort to help each other understand their roles in fire protection and to help us understand the type of training that would better enable the fire protection chief officers to successfully function in the political field in which they must operate in their home base.

The first forum was last year and we will have two more this year.

The last program that I would like to bring to your attention is a wildland residential interface program.

This program which the United States Fire Administration, together with the U.S. Forest Service and the National Fire Protection Association, initiated a few years ago, is in response to the metropolitan area spread into forests.

As this occurs, we have more and more wildland types of fires threatening structures. The fire departments that are being called upon to meet this increasing problem are usually rural or volunteer departments. A special self-taught course on the subject of preparing the wildland interface for fire has been developed and will be pilot tested before the end of the fiscal year. It will consist of video tapes, workbooks, and tests.

In conclusion, I am very proud of the hard work and the major impact I believe NFA has had on our Nation's fire problems. It would not be possible without the overwhelming support of the men and women of the fire service and, of course, of this Congress.

Thank you very much.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF WIIIIAM M. NEVILLE, JR. SUPERINTENDENT, NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMYFEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Mr. Chairman, I am William M. Neville, Jr., Superintendent of the National Fire Academy.

I appear before you today to ask for authorization of appropriations for Fiscal Year 1989 for the training activities authorized under the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act. The amount requested in the President's budget for these activities is $10,028,000. This amount is nearly identical to the amount requested last year and again reflects a significant reduction in the travel stipend for students attending on-campus training in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The National Fire Academy will continue to function but at a reduced level of service.

This reduction in student travel stipends shifts more of the costs funded by the Federal Government to State and local government. It asks them to pay more of the cost of travel to Emmitsburg. The Federal Government would continue to pay for the costs of instruction, course materials, and maintenance of the Academy facility.

It is an honor to appear before you today to report on the continuing role of the National Fire Academy in furthering fire safety through our training and education programs.

Mr. Bragdon has very ably summarized the events leading to the creation of the present United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Fire Academy. Before I report on the Academy's current programs, I would like to give you some additional background on the NFA's history and organizational structure.

The Federal government purchased the site for the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, in the Spring of 1979. The Emergency Management Institute and the United States Fire Administration were relocated to the Emmitsburg site within the next few years and the facility became the National Emergency Training Center (NETC).

The first NFA classes were held in January 1980. This is a remarkable accomplishment when one realizes that a small, core staff was able to develop curricula, hire faculty, provide student facilities, and deliver advanced training programs in a few short months.

Since 1980, over 28,000 students from every state and many foreign countries have been trained on the Emmitsburg campus in a variety of resident courses. These resident courses have been developed specifically to further the professional development of fire service personnel and other professions responsible for fire prevention and control activities.

Off-campus delivery of courses has reached approximately 100,000 fire service and related professions personnel through both direct and in-direct deliveries.

In eight years of operation, the NFA has gained a national reputation as an institution of excellence; an institution whose courses are eagerly sought by State and local agencies who want to enhance their personnel's abilities and knowledge in protecting their communities and citizens.

Presently, the N[illegible] delivery system is multi-pronged. Courses are delivered on-campus at the resident facility in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and off-campus in States and local communities throughout the Nation. Academy sponsored activities expand the academic outreach through universities and colleges, making degree programs in fire technology and management available to fire service personnel who, due to unusual working shifts and locations, would not otherwise have those opportunities. The National Fire Academy sponsors regional fire service networks and forums for State and local elected and appointed officials. These networks and forums provide input for curriculum development and opportunities to make the policy-making level aware of fire protection trends in our Nation.

One of my top priorities as Superintendent has been to increase the availability of Academy programs to the Nation's approximately one million volunteer firefighters. The volunteer sector represents nearly 80 percent of all firefighters across America. Most communities (and the great majority of the nuclear-powered electric generating plants) are totally protected by volunteer firefighters, yet these organizations typically have very restricted access to training resources. It is my intention to strengthen the NFA's partnership with State and local fire training organizations to make sure the Nation's volunteer firefighters have greater access to the Academy's training and education programs.

The vast majority of students participating over the years in the on-campus, resident program have been career personnel. On the other hand, nearly 50% of students participating in the Academy's off-campus, two-day courses have been volunteers. Working closely with the National Volunteer Council and the State training systems, we have reviewed the limited volunteer participation in the resident courses and we have concluded that the average two-week duration of these courses is a significant factor limiting volunteer attendance.

We feel we came up with a promising solution. NFA has developed two one-week, on-campus courses designed specifically for volunteers. These courses limit the number of days most volunteers will spend away from the job. Yet these offerings maintain course content integrity and quality, while addressing those problems unique to the volunteer fire service.

Each course begins on Sunday and runs through Friday, with evening sessions to insure maximum content delivery. During this year's pilot phase, the program will be

limited to 200, with four openings for each State. We are calling the program VIP, the Volunteer Incentive Program. Costs for the volunteers are handled the same way as all residential programs with instruction, partial travel stipends, on-campus lodging, and course materials provided at no charge. The volunteers (or their departments) will pay the cost of meals and some of the transportation costs.

While this pilot program is a step in the right direction, it is not the only way we are aggressively seeking to increase volunteer participation in on-campus training. State weekends are becoming a major focus of the Academy.

This year 15 weekends are set aside for fire service personnel from a particular State to attend courses on the NFA campus. Eighteen States participate with some States requesting to share a weekend; for example North Carolina and South Carolina. The State Fire Training System requests and sponsors the weekend, identifies the courses to be offered, and recruits and selects the students. The Academy hosts the weekend and provides the instruction in up to six courses. Courses range from "Fire/Arson Detection" to "Initial Company Tactical Operations." Over half of the participants in the State Weekend Program are usually volunteers. Next year, 25 states will be participating, up dramatically from this year's total of 18.

To increase the availability of hazardous materials training, the Academy has packaged both the "Chemistry of Hazardous Materials" and "Hazardous Materials Tactical Considerations" resident courses for off-campus delivery as part of the Title III/SARA approved training.

To meet the Title III criteria of training consistency, both courses are being delivered by an instructor on the Academy's approved lead instructor list. Since there is currently a shortage of lead instructors trained and qualified to deliver the "Chemistry" course, NFA is offering a new course to train local instructors in how to deliver that course.

The ten-day instructor training program will be offered several times during the year as resources and demand dictate.

A similar instructor preparation course is being considered for the "Tactics" course.

Earlier this year, for the first time in four years, the Academy hosted a conference of the Nation's State Fire Training System Directors. A strong partnership with these systems is vital to the success of all fire training efforts. This group also serves as one of the driving forces in the development of the Academy's curriculum.

This highlights many of the new activities underway to increase the Academy's outreach to the volunteer firefighting community. Along with the strong off-campus delivery program, the Train-the-Trainer outreach, and other special projects, the Academy hopes to increase volunteer participation in every phase of our academic program.

While off-campus deliveries are increasing, up to this point these off-campus increases have not been done at the expense of the resident programs. In fact I feel this current academic year has been one of the best in recent years for our resident program.

By the end of this academic year in September, nearly 4000 students will have attended 160 classes as part of the Academy's resident curriculum. One new course has been added: "Code Enforcement: A Systems Approach." This course is designed for fire service personnel responsible for the code process in their community, including adoption, change, revision, administration, application and enforcement.

This year the Academy graduated the first class of fire officers to complete our Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). This on-campus program is designed to provide senior fire officers with a broad perspective of various facets of fire administration. Over a four year period, the officers continue their professional development in four graduate and upper level college accredited courses at the NFA. This type of program is intended to accomplish that aspect of the Academy's mission relating to executive level training. In FY 88, for the first time, all participants in the Executive Fire Officer Program were required to spend 25 percent of the course time in fire prevention-oriented courses.

One of our most innovative resident offerings is the CAMEO program. Officially known as Computer Assisted Management of Emergency Operations (CAMEO), this is a program to assist first responders in managing hazardous materials spills more effectively through the use of computer generated information. The model being used was

developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with support from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Coast Guard. It was pilot tested by the Seattle Fire Department and other departments in that area. The departments found it to be most successful in providing location specific information on control and evacuation.

This first responder computer application lends itself to multi-agency response. Using CAMEO, a local jurisdiction can begin making key decisions on how to handle a hazmat incident within the first crucial minutes, including which areas to evacuate, how many people to deploy, what toxic materials are involved and so forth. Having this type of technology available is critical to fire departments since they are called upon to control approximately 95 percent of all local hazmat incidents. CAMEO is a field incident-oriented program, a program for action that goes beyond the planning document stage.

Realizing the need for such a system, the Academy entered into a joint venture with NOAA to train personnel from user departments and agencies across the country. We were able to adapt all NOAA training materials at no cost and this year we will train 250 representatives from user departments and agencies. Training is planned both on and off campus and the Academy will continue to support the newest CAMEO technology as it is developed.

Computer technology is very important to the efficient operations of fire departments. In the upcoming academic year, the NFA will continue to incorporate a computer module in several of the resident courses. The current microcomputer course will be eliminated in favor of presenting computer application as part of individual courses. The Academy will continue to offer a course where students learn how to assess information needs and plan for the acquisition of multi-user computer systems. These systems can result in substantial savings in terms of personnel and fiscal resources for local fire departments.

In addition to the on-campus and off-campus deliveries, the Academy sponsors special programs to broaden the academic opportunities available to fire service personnel. There are approximately 35 four-year resident baccalaureate fire science degree programs offered across the country. It is estimated that 66 percent of the students live more than 50 miles from the nearest resident program. The nature of fire service shift work often prohibits personnel from attending regularly scheduled classes. This comes at a time when State and local jurisdictions are requiring college degrees for senior officers.

To meet this growing need, the Academy offers the Open Learning Fire Service Program, a program that links more accessible community college courses with the baccalaureate curriculum of the Open Learning consortium's seven regional colleges and universities. This stepping stone concept will afford fire service personnel a better opportunity to obtain a baccalaureate degree in the fire field while still working full time in their local departments.

As Superintendent, I clearly realize that the fire service is part of a greater community structure. This year we initiated a special series of forums to bring chief executive officers (CEO's) of local communities and fire chiefs together to improve each group's understanding of the other's responsibilities. These forums also provide the Academy with an opportunity to educate CEO's in our curriculum and in fire protection trends. At the same time, the NFA staff gets information from the CEO's on how to make fire chiefs more effective in their local management environment. This information can then be incorporated into the resident course curriculum.

The fire chief does not decide what local building codes will be enacted. The fire chief does not make the final decision on what city or county resources will be dedicated to fire prevention and protection. Therefore, it is imperative that the National Fire Academy train fire chiefs in the skills which will enable them to have a greater impact with local policymakers. Hopefully this enhanced role will result in policymakers having a greater awareness of fire safety issues, especially in allocation of resources and the development of fire protection legislation.

The first forum was held in July of 1987 and our target audience was chief executive officers and fire chiefs. The exchange of ideas at that forum was extremely beneficial and insightful for the participants and for our staff. Two more forums are scheduled for this year and we are hoping to include volunteer fire service chiefs and elected officials as participants.

During the year, experts from the private sector as well as the public sector are brought in to lecture during the Academy's Executive Development Series for senior fire officers. Ongoing efforts are being made to broaden the Academy's audience with city and county officials and leaders of allied professional groups.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me discuss a new initiative at the National Fire Academy, an initiative that accomplishes many goals within one program. An emerging problem in this country is that of wildland/residential interface. At an increasing rate our metropolitan areas are growing into our forests and brush-covered lands. As homes go up, so does the incident of wildland fire. The burden of dealing with these fires increasingly falls upon small, primarily volunteer fire departments and rural fire protection districts. These are the firefighters who historically have had less experience and time for traditional kinds of training in wildland/urban interface firefighting.

To help fill this training void, the Academy is developing a pilot course, "Wildland/Residential Interface Protection: A National Problem With Local Solutions." This is a self-taught course; a first of its kind developed by the National Fire Academy. The target audience is rural area fire departments, predominately volunteers. A secondary audience is local officials and other affected groups in communities such as architects, planners, builders and other forest-related agencies. The course materials includes a workbook, a stand alone video tape and selected reference materials. The course will be pilot tested in selected areas beginning in August 1988.

What makes this approach unique is that it provides flexibility in both content and format so it can be adapted to local circumstances.

This has truly been a year of change at the National Fire Academy. For the first time in years, many staff vacancies are being filled. New programs have been initiated to broaden our audience. Existing programs and courses are being reviewed and enhanced to reflect current and anticipated needs of career and volunteer fire service personnel. Internally, we are preparing to reorganize in a way that will support a more flexible delivery system, an enhanced on and off-campus program, and an improved partnership/relationship with State and local fire training systems. This has not happened without much hard work on the part of the NFA staff. And it could not have happened without the overwhelming support of Congress and of the men and women of the fire service who believe in the National Fire Academy and are willing to demonstrate their support year in, year out in a multitude of ways.

In closing, let me say that I am very proud to have been a part of the National Fire Academy. The staff is a group of dedicated professionals who work long and hard to offer academic excellence in training and education. The accomplishments I have listed today are the result of their work and the unconditional support of the Nation's fire service community.

Thank you.

Senator GORE. Thank you very much.

We appreciate both of you being here.

I have a few questions of my own here and will begin with questions for you, Mr. Bragdon.

The administration has proposed eliminating the line item relating to the Office of Fire Prevention and Arson Control.

Was that your recommendation or did that come about because of someone else in the administration?

Mr. BRAGDON. Well, I guess the appropriate way to respond to that is the administration is a collective entity. We were part, obviously, of that process, the end result of which is the recommendation not to fund that.

Obviously, I think from the statement that I made earlier, my support of fire programs—without my directly answering you or being too evasive—that was the administration's final position.

Senator GORE. I think I understand what you said.

As opposed to the initial position of the administration?

Mr. BRAGDON. Yes, sir.

Senator GORE. Okay.

Could you identify which, among the major components of this office's activities, which efforts have been the most successful, in your opinion?

Mr. BRAGDON. This office really is a collective entitybecause the intent, again, of the framers of the act, was to give a high emphasis to fire prevention in this country, where most emphasis in the past had been reactive or in the suppression area.

For example, we have the Community Volunteer Fire Prevention Program, where the Federal Government enters into a partnership with the state and the governor appoints a Fire Safety Committee and that Fire Safety Committee selects exemplary projects of a pilot nature in the states where the program is operative.

Currently, it is in 29 states and the District of Columbia.

We have found thus far, because the intent of that program is to create a partnership with the private sector and to deal and work with volunteer organizations, not directly with the fire service, although they are a partner, that the feedback from those programs, since the Federal Government has moved out after two years' involvement, shows they are sustaining themselves, and there has been far more invested in those programs from the private sector than there has been from government.

In fact, at this very moment, at the Emmitsburg facility, there is a teleconference taking place on a national basis on this subject, "Partnerships Against Fire."

The public education and awareness programs are initiatives I alluded to, where we have had great contribution from the media, the private sector, and others in creating an awareness to the fire problems of this country. I mentioned only the one of the smoke detector campaign.

We are addressing a campaign, for example, for the rural audience on alternate heating devices and the problems they create relative to fire. We will also be looking at rural arson. These are identified problem areas.

The quick acting residential sprinkler technology, which evolved from Fire Administration research dollars, now is in place in over 200 communities in this country and is growing extensively as an alternate way of providing fire protection.

So those are some, just a few, of the initiatives that we are speaking to.

I failed to mention, as a sample of our efforts, that there are some current publications that are disseminated by the Fire Administration on a variety of subject matters, and I would be pleased to provide those for the Committee's records and for your individual offices if you so wish.

Senator GORE. Is it your personal opinion that the states can sustain all of the programs that are currently underway in the Office of Fire Prevention and Arson Control?

Mr. BRAGDON. If is my opinion that few, if any, of the programs would be sustained by state and local government. They do not have the financial capacity.

Senator GORE. All right. I appreciate that.

Now, Congressman Weldon suggested that the Subcommittee adopt a limitation on fire funds for site administration, the limitation contained in the House bill. It is my understanding that fire funds have been utilized for site administration in an amount disproportionate to the fire community's use.

Is that correct?

If so, what effect has this siphoning off of funds had on the Fire Administration's programs?

Mr. BRAGDON. It has had little direct effect on the Fire Administration's programs because the National Fire Academy, contrary to what is addressed in the act, is not an organizational component of the Fire Administration.

We contribute to site administration funds because we are a tenant at that facility.

Senator GORE. Has the contribution been disproportionate to the tenancy?

Mr. BRAGDON. The contribution may be disproportionate to that of other tenants or users.

Senator GORE. All right.

Now, you say that the Nation continues to experience about 6,000 deaths a year, and "we seem to have reached a plateau from which it is difficult to descend."

Is there a breakthrough that we are looking for? Very briefly, what are you doing to try to reduce this level of deaths?

Mr. BRAGDON. Now that we have a Comprehensive National Fire Data System that did not heretofore exist, we are able to determine where fire is occurring and who the fires are impacting.

Therefore, we could take our resources, as well as state and local government resources, and make that kind of concentration.

For example, the State of South Carolina recently notified us that at the beginning of this calendar year they were having a fire death per day in that state.

We, unfortunately, identify the Southeastern States as the "burn belt" in this country because of the impact fire has. The characteristics there are that it is not necessarily the inner city, but rural America, that suffers as a consequence of heating devices. So we need a concentrated educational program in those kinds of areas, working with states and local governments.

So, we are able to identify new targhets and impacts.

I might add that our National Fire Data System has grown to the extent now that it involves 40 states and just less than 15,000 fire departments that are contributing data to that system.

We pay an organization of their members about $350,000 a year to manage the system. In-kind contributions of states and local governments equate to about $10 million.

So I think that is a good partnership arrangement, certainly for the Federal Government.

We now have, really, for the first time, some significant data to reflect on where we should be concentrating our resources.

Senator GORE. Well, as a resident of a rural area in Tennessee, I am certainly interested in that part of the program.

I will have some other questions to which I hope you will respond for the record.

Briefly, Mr. Neville, your testimony shows that the administration requests a significant reduction in the student travel stipend for those attending training at the Fire Academy.

What is the extent of that reduction in your request?

Mr. NEVILLE. It would, in sheer numbers, result in approximately a two-thirds reduction in the amount of money available to us to provide help in travel costs to the students attending classes at our facility at Emmitsburg.

Senator GORE. So, about two-thirds of the students now receiving training would not be able to get the stipend and those who depended on the stipend for attendance would no longer be able to attend?

Is that correct?

Mr. NEVILLE. Well, we have not been able to make a survey to accurately answer that question, Senator. We might propose, rather than just cutting off two-thirds, that we support some percentage of their travel. But there is no doubt that there would be a reduction, a significant reduction, in my mind, on the number of attendees.

Senator GORE. I have talked to firefighters who just say it is not complicated and if I have to pay for this travel out of my own pocket, I just can't go. I mean, it is not as if this is a highly paid profession, where they are setting aside funds for a trip to Disney World in the Fire Academy every year. I mean, you just don't find that.

Was this recommendation the final position of the administration?

Mr. NEVILLE. Yes, sir. It was the final position of the administration.

Senator GORE. What part of the Academy's resources are utilized by agencies or groups, other than the Fire Administration?

How has this affected the Academy's ability to fulfill its responsibilities to the fire community?

Mr. NEVILLE. I can't give you an accurate answer on that because, at least to my knowledge, there has never been an audit taken that would allow me to do that.

I can tell you this, that approximately 40 percent of the money given to the Fire Academy for program funds is used to support site activities at the National Emergency Training Center.

Approximately 50 to 60 percent of the activities at the National Emergency Training Center are directly for the Fire Academy. About 65 percent of the total support for the National Emergency Training Center Administration comes from National Fire Academy funds. So, certainly other activities, at least in my mind, are being supported at this time by fire funds.

But I really am unable to give you an exact number.

Senator GORE. Okay.

I have several other questions to which I hope you will respond for the record.

I want now to recognize my colleague, Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Bragdon, we are in the middle of the most severe drought in the opinion of many in this century, which has caused fires all over the country, including in my state. I am sure you have been involved in the fire that was on the Arizona-Mexico border recently.

How bad is it going to get this year?

Mr. BRAGDON. I appreciate your concern having spent my working career in a fire service in a state that was extremely fire prone from wild fires. That state is Southern California where wild fire was a way of life. But the point we have tried to emphasize is that the problem of wild fire is one of national dimensions. It is just a question of frequency of occurrence in the states.

Florida, for example, two years ago had some very severe wild fires and lost of many structures.

So it is a problem that does have national implications.

As Mr. Neville mentioned earlier, as we have sought improved values or built out into this wild land area or this interface area, we now have created a problem of greater dimension,because I think a lot of the responsibility of planning has not accompanied that type of development. So that is the initiative that he referred to and that we are working on with the United States Forest Service, the state foresters, and the National Fire Protection Association.

Again, with education and awareness, and with the appropriate kind of planning you can live compatibly in that kind of environment.

So the potential that you are referring to I think is quite great because of the changes that have taken place over the years. We are not looking at the same fire ground that we may have a decade or so ago, when similar conditions existed.

So there is a very large potential for loss, yes.

Senator MCCAIN. So, in some parts of the country, our firefighting capabilities will be put under enormous strain?

Mr. BRAGDON. Last year, for example, in California, specifically Northern California, Oregon and somewhat in Washington, the largest wildfire experience in this country since the twenties occurred, primarily on Federal lands, but a lot of state lands were impacted as well. The largest collection of resource capability was gathered in the suppression efforts—25,000 people, consisting of Federal employees, state employees, local government employees and the militaryas well as the private sector. This gives you an indication of the size of the suppression effort.

The damage factor is sometimes immeasurable because in wildfire, you have what is called the "fire-flood sequence." If the fire does not get you, the flood will, as we denude the water-holding vegetation on our landscape.

So the potential is great, and it can't be measured just in terms of fire alone.

Senator McCAIN. Thank you.

Mr. Bragdon, do you believe that the fire detection and fire warning devices, as they exist today, are sufficient and supplying adequate warning to Americans who are hearing impaired?

Mr. BRAGDON. No, sir, I do not. In fact, there has been very little done or suggested in this area.

You may be aware that the House Science, Space, and Technology Subcommittee has made that part of their recommendation, as an amendment to this act, that we do a research program and submit recommendations by January 1, 1989 on this subject.

We are aware of some of the efforts that are going on, but they are very insignificant. Primarily, they reside in some states having a requirement that a hotel or a place where you rent rooms would provide one smoke detector of high intensity lights or strobe lighting for every 50 rooms for some person that was hearing impaired to rent. Others have increased that for two for 50, and we know of two hotel chains that have that as corporate policy.

But as far as a national initiative—and I am not advocating that the Federal Government necessarily move into this area, other than making recommendations, there has been none.

One of the projects that I mentioned earlier, our Community Volunteer Fire Prevention Program, in the State of Maryland—the Seroptimist Club in Frederick, Maryland, has a project right now, which is that there are no technical standards that have been designed for these kinds of devices, and they are working with industry to try to develop standards. So there is some minor attention going on. We hope this effort of ours will give more emphasis to the needs.

Senator McCAIN. Well, I hope so, too, Mr. Bragdon, because it seems to me that if I were hearing impaired and in a hotel room today, many of those fires that you mentioned that gained so much attention, MGM or others, there would have been absolutely no warning since the warnings are based on sound.

So I hope, Mr. Chairman, that perhaps at an appropriate time, maybe as an amendment or something of that kind in this bill, we could at least try to get some study as to how we could provide the same kind of warning to Americans who are hearing impaired as for those who are not.

Senator GORE. Well, if I could respond briefly, I certainly agree.

The House included a request for a report by January 1 of next year on this question. I think we could certainly put that in our report also. We will work together on that.

Senator McCAIN. Thank you.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I thank our witnesses.

Senator GORE. Thank you.

As I said earlier, we appreciate your willingness to respond in writing to other questions on code enforcement, renewed code enforcement programs, and a variety of other matters.

I thank you very much.

Mr. BRAGDON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator McCain.

Mr. NEVILLE. Thank you, Senators.

Senator GORE. Our final witness today is Chief Frank J. Baker of the Memphis, Tennessee, Fire Department. I am especially pleased to welcome Chief Baker to our hearing.

He is a 29 year veteran of the Memphis Fire Department, who was appointed to his current position in January of this year. He is a native Tennessean, and we are very pleased that he is able to be with us this morning, representing not only himself, with his long experience in this field, but representing the International Association of Fire Chiefs as well.

Chief, thank you for coming.

Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF FRANK J. BAKER, CHIEF, MEMPHIS TENNESSEE FIRE DEPARTMENT, REPRESENTING THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS; ACCOMPANIED BY TIMOTHY BUTTERS, MANAGER, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Mr. BAKER. Thank you, Senator Gore.

I hate to see you leave, Senator McCain, as I was going to be touching on some issues that you would be wanting to hear.

But if you need to leave, go ahead.

Senator GORE. You wouldn't believe how thin we are spread around here. He'll get a full report from us.

Senator MCCAIN. I seldom disobey the instructions of the Fire Chief.

Let me say that I have reserved some time on the floor in order to make a brief statement, and I apologize for doing so.

I have a capable staff who will report back to me. And I also would appreciate the opportunity to visit with you either this time or the next time you are in Washington.

Senator GORE. I will let him know what you say. Don't worry.

Mr. BAKER. I appreciate that, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. Please accept my apologies.

Mr. BAKER. Thank you much, Senator.

Senator Gore, I am honored and pleased to be here. I feel like I am a bit out of my bailiwick, being here to testify before a Congressional Subcommittee. It is a first for me.

But I did want to be here on behalf of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the Memphis Fire Department, and the Nation's fire services.

As pleased as I am to be here, I am a bit disappointed and somewhat frustrated to have to appear what seems like year after year to keep programs going that are so vital to the fire services country-wide.

Pardon me, but I meant to introduce my associate.

This is Tim Butters and he is with the International Association of Fire Chiefs. He is our government relations person.

Senator GORE. Welcome.

Mr. BUTTERS. Thank you.

Mr. BAKER. I am trying to express to you my disappointment and somewhat frustrated feelings at having to be here, mainly because the biggest issue that stands out to me is the stipend program. We utilize this program so much in the city of Memphis and in the area surrounding Memphis. The associations that I belong to all participate in this program, and if it is removed or greatly reduced, we will be eliminated.

Senator GORE. Could you expect that the State of Tennessee, the State of Mississippi, and the State of Arkansas could do all this without a national program?

Mr. BAKER. No, sir.

The two issues that stand out, eliminated at the present time I will get to in a second. We are faced right now, with the dry season and the increased brush fires and trash fires that we are dealing with right now, a depletion of our funds. The smoke detector campaigns that are going on nationwide are using our time and efforts. It is just something that we are totally engrossed in.

To further enhance what I am saying, my being here at this particular time is quite coincidental. I have been in office since January 1, 1988, and Memphis is in its worst year in history thus far with fire fatalities.

Last year, we had 25 fire fatalities. This year we have already had 28. Of the 28, 25 of these have been under the age of six or over the age of 60; 24 of the 28 have been in the black communities.

These are people that are hard to approach. We are striving in every known way that we can to touch these people. They are too young to understand; they are sometimes too old to want to stop and listen to what we have to say. We just don't have a way to get to them.

In the deprived communities, they are out working during the day, when we normally make our——

Senator GORE. That buzzer is because the Senate is going into session and it will be over in just a minute. That is not a smoke detector going off.

Mr. BAKER. These people are hard to get to, hard to address, and we are searching in every way we possibly can to get to them.

A large portion of that effort is in training that we need in public safety, how to address these people, how to get to them. We need every possible program and method available today to do this.

To consider reducing the funds for the Fire Administration and the Academy is totally contradictory to what is going on nationwide. It just is hard for me to believe that they could consider reducing the funds that are normally available for them.

Earlier someone alluded to how 6,000 Americans die annually from fires. Now, 50 percent of them are set by juveniles.

This is a situation, again, that is something new to us. We have had juvenile fire setters before, but it seems to be increasing. By this, I mean that juveniles now are using this as a way to show their resentment, whatever, to parents, to the establishment, and so they set fires.

Now, juveniles do not set small fires. The little guy does not necessarily go with the little fire. These things are sometimes in multi-family dwellings and there are multiple fatalities.

It is just hard to believe that every effort is not being made on the part of the administration to see that these programs are funded and kept up to a peak level.

The Fire Administration joined with the Justice Department recently with the Juvenile Fire Setter Program. But if we eliminate the fire prevention and arson portion, it is gone, and it will never get off the ground. We will have lost it.

We, in Memphis, have used the Juvenile Fire Setter Counselling Program and at this time, we have 15 juvenile fire setters that we are dealing with. We are taking these kids to the individual fire stations, hooking them up with a firefighter as a sort of big brother or big sister. We only have one female firefighter, but we are hooking these kids up with a firefighter for counselling, and it is doing wonders for us.

We are well pleased with what is going on. But this thing needs to be increased. It needs to be enhanced.

In 1986, we had 352 what we call major fires. Anything in excess of $1 million is called a "major fire,"5 and they amounted to $897 million in loss in property, educational facilities and manufacturers.

These things put people on the streets and eliminate jobs. A lot of these are dry facts and figures and people hear them, they read them, and they make an impact at the time they read them. But they are soon forgotten. It is not something that continues to slap you in the face.

As long as the fire loss or fire situation does not affect the individual, they seem to forget about it or want to turn their head from it.

We have, in Memphis, Federal facilities that I believe match any in any other city in the country. We provide fire protection for all these Federal facilities.

One is the military supply depot of the Defense Logistics Agency, with which I am sure you are familiar. Three months ago, we had a situation out there, a hazardous materials incident, that entailed using 14 fire companies, our entire Haz-Mat response team—and, by the way, all of the officers on that team were trained here at the Academy—we had them all out there for 28 hours. We had over 3,500 55 gallon drums of acetone and ketone and different flammable liquids that were stored on this Federal facility.

Now, we don't have the right to make inspections on these facilities, so they are stored there. The building collapsed. Fortunately, we did not have quite the incident we could have had. But we were there in case we did.

I think it cost the city of Memphis $23,000, to provide that cleanup operation and monitoring of the situation until it was brought under control.

Senator GORE. Nobody was injured, then?

Mr. BAKER. No, sir. Not one person.

Senator GORE. They had all received training?

Mr. BAKER. Yes, sir. Absolutely. That is why the injuries were not there. We made the correct approach. We made the evacuation as need be.

With properly trained personnel, you can move into an operation like that with confidence and make things happen which, without the training, just won't happen.

Senator GORE. How many people responded to that incident?

Mr. BAKER. In the neighborhood of 85 to 90.

Senator GORE. And all of them had received training at the Fire Academy?

Mr. BAKER. Oh, no, sir. All of the officers on the Haz-Mat Response Team had.

Senator GORE. How many of them were involved?

Mr. BAKER. There were 22.

Senator GORE. They had all received training at the Academy?

Mr. BAKER. Every one of them had received training here.

Senator GORE. How many of them received a stipend to make the trip up for the training?

Mr. BAKER. Every one of them. I doubt they would have been here otherwise.

Senator GORE. If they had not had it, how many of them would have come?

Mr. BAKER. They would not have been here, sir.

Senator GORE. If they had not had the training and responded to that incident, what kind of thing did you face?

Mr. BAKER. The potential disaster was not making the proper approach to the incident and not surrounding the incident with the proper distances for allowing for the potential disaster; knowing how to control, lift and move the damage barrels; in other words, the firefighters, in their chemical suits, made the approach, searched the area, found the damaged barrels, had them removed, cleaned and diked the area, got all the flammable liquids pumped out, and then removed the remaining undamaged barrels.

We've walked into situations like this in past years. In my 29 years of work, I am lucky, given some situations, that I am still sitting here. We have wandered into things like that not knowing, the old "leather lung" get in there and get it type atmosphere. We don't have that now.

But that is due in large part to the training that we have received here.

Senator GORE. Well, we can go back to that.

Mr. BAKER. Sir?

Senator GORE. We could go back to that.

Mr. BAKER. Oh, no, sir. We can't.

I just wanted to give you an idea of some of the protection that we provide for the Federal facilities and we are not reimbursed for this. There are FAA facilities, Reserve Banks, Federal buildings, all of these

things we provide protection for, and now they want to reduce the dollars that they have furnished us for the training in the past.

There is one other item that kind of sticks close to me. I have wondered about it for a long time, though I have not dug into it like I should have.

I am curious as to why the Academy is not under or run by the Fire Administration. It was originally. It was intended that way by Congress and I think at one time maybe the Fire Administration might have been close to going out the window, so they moved it under FEMA and that is where it still is.

I honestly think it would better serve the purpose and the dollars meant for those programs would be better spent and better allocated to have the Academy under the Fire Administration, as opposed to being under FEMA.

That is an idea of mine and some of the guys in our fire chiefs associations, and we sat around at some of our meetings and wondered why it has not been put back under the Fire Administration. Maybe this Subcommittee can make a recommendation along those lines.

I don't know if that is in your power, though. That is something that we would like to look into.

There is definitely a role for the Federal government in local fire protection. We don't have the resources, we don't have the dollars to do the things that need to be done and have been done in the past by the Fire Administration and by the Academy.

We are strapped for dollars like everyone else, and we just don't have the moneys to continue the programs and to allow the training and the research and things that go on here to be done on a local level.

Thank you, sir.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF FRANK BAKER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, FIRE DEPARTMENT, MEMPHIS, TN

Good Morning Senator Gore and the other members of this SubCommittee. I am Frank Baker, Chief of the Memphis Fire Department. I am pleased and honored to testify before this SubCommittee on behalf of the International Assosciation of Fire Chiefs, the Memphis Fire Department and the nations fire service.

The IAFC is extremely disappointed and frustrated to have to again submit to this Subcommittee a request for the reinstatement of program funds for the U.S. Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy, which have been eliminated from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's budget for Fiscal Year 1989.

The FEMA FY89 budget request reduces the National Fire Academy stipend program and totally eliminates the Fire Prevention and Arson Control Programs of the U.S. Fire Administration. These budget reductions total of $4 million and least four staff positions. Every year, since 1982, the Federal Fire Programs, including the National Fire Academy, the U.S. Fire Administration, and the Center for Fire Research, have been cut and reduced to token levels. The FY89 FEMA budget budget has increased over last year, yet the Fire Programs are not simply kept at level funding, they are reduced.

My appearence before you and the members of this committee is quite timely in that my home city of Memphis is the midst of one the worst years in history in terms of fire fatalities. As a 29 year veteran of one of the nations finest fire departments, I cannot relay to you my heart felt dismay at the number of children (under 6) and elderly (over age 60) that have perished in fires since January 1, 1988. Of those 28 fire deaths, 25 have been fallen into those two catagories. My role as Deputy Director of Fire Suppression demands that I exhaust every possible means to curtail this tragic course of events. A large portion of this efforts is indeed training and the development of every possible program and method available today.

To even consider reducing the funds available for the U.S. Fire Administration's Fire and Arson Prevention programs is a contradiction of all efforts being made nationwide. As a member of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, I must insist that every consideration be given to increasing all available efforts to reduce fire loss and increase fire safety.

In the United States, nearly 6,000 Americans die in fires annually, most of them in their homes, most of them children and the elderly; these deadly fires are attributable to smoking materials, problems with heating devices; and arson. Arson that is not only used by those attempting to defraud the insurance industry, but also by juveniles. Some reports suggest that well over 50% of arson incidents are by juveniles. These cases are not simple trash and outside fires; many of these juvenile related fires result in multiple fatalities. The IAFC feels this is a significant national problem that deserves attention. No one local fire department alone can make an impact. However, given a federal focal point. progress is possible. The U.S. Fire Administration recently joined forces with the U.S. Justice Department to look at the juvenile arson problem. However, due to the proposed FY89 budget, that effort will never get off the ground.

The U.S. Fire Administration, through its Fire Prevention and Arson Control Program have contributed to the continued development of the Residential Sprinkler Program, which now helps protect the citizens in over 200 communities nationwide. There have been at least two dozen lives saved by this technology. That technology would not be in place now without the research supported by the US Fire Administration. Other effective programs that have been started and need to be continued include: the Juvenile Firesetter Counseling Program, which has helped local fire chiefs deal with ever rising juvenile firesetting problem; the Community Volunteer Fire Prevention Program, has helped start, not underwrite, some very effective local fire prevention and education programs; the USFA's Public Awareness Campaign and Sesame Street Fire Safety Programs, which have reached millions of Americans through radio and television.

The economic impact of fire on local communities is equally as staggering. According to the National Fire Protection Association, there were 352 large loss fires in the United States in 1986, in this case defined as fires causing in excess of $1 million in property loss, that accounted for a total loss of $897 million. Many of these fires occured in manufacturing plants, offices, and educational facilities resulting in worker displacement and economic costs to the local community.

A continued strong federal focus, through the U.S. Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy, can continue to help bring improvements in building and life safety standards, public education and awareness, and in the ability for the fire and emergency services to respond to those emergencies.

This nation is served by an estimated 32,000 fire departments, staffed by over a million firefighters, both career and volunteer men and women who risk their lives in responding to emergencies of all types, every day. As providers of emergency service, the fire service is on the front line protecting not only the public, but the themselves and the environment, from further harm. Issues that are gaining attention now, like hazardous and toxic chemicals, and infectious diseases are of major concern to the local government and the local fire service. However, as issues, they transcend local, state and even international boundaries. These are not the problems of the fire service, these are "our" problems.

A cutback at the federal level will not equate to an increase at the state or local level. In all my appeals for the absolute best programs and procedures, the National Fire Academy programs have always come to the top of the list. So many of Memphis' best trained officers, and current technologies have come from Emmitsburg, Maryland.

The bottom line is, the fire service is reducing the life and property loss of the general public and reducing the fire fighter death rate. But help is needed. The elimination or reduction of the National Fire Academy's stipend program will eliminate participation by the very firefighters who need it the most. The level of financial resources available to local government from the federal government has been cut so drastically that funds are almost non-existent. Yet, the federal government asks locals to do more and more. The most recent example is the emergency planning and response under the Title III provisions of Superfund. The Title III regulations will cost local governments and fire departments millions of dollars in order to comply with the requirements. The requirements under that program, although resulting in improving the knowledge about hazardous materials, will financially strap many fire departments because there is no funding from any source to support the implementation of the program.

The proposed FEMA budget, in effect, will reduce the NFA student stipends by nearly two-thirds, and will be the first year of a three year planned phase-out, with the intent for local governments to take over those costs through "cost-sharing by local governments." To be sure, there will be no cost sharing, there will be simply be no students, with the exception of those that are within driving distance of Emmitsburg, Maryland. Many of my associates have had to conceal training and travel funds in other program budgets in order to maintain available funds for education.

If the intent of the administration is to share costs with local governments, the local governments should be given credit for the billions of dollars currently spent on responding to emergencies at the local level. The federal government does little to contribute to the financial support of local fire departments but still receives that local fire protection. If we wish to share costs, then the federal government should recognize its impact on local government. In a recent incident at a military supply depot, 14 fire companies, along with our Haz-Mat Response Team, all of whom were trained at the National Fire Academy, were on the scene of a potentially disastrous hazardous materials incident for 28 hours. The estimated cost of this incident to the City of Memphis was approximately $23,000, none of which was reimbursed. Like many cities, Memphis has many federal government facilities which are protected by the municipal fire department, including the Defense Logistics Agency, FAA facilities, federal reserve banks and other buildings.

In a recent Armed Services Committee hearing in the House of Representatives, Congressman Curt Weldon (PA) successfully proposed to allocate some 60 million dollars to improve the fire protection of naval vessels. There is something wrong when we come before you to ask to replace $3.2 million so that the total USFA budget can be elevated to a little less than $6 million, and at the same time, in one hearing, Congress allocated $60 million to improve the fire safety of US naval vessels. We recently heard a legislator refer to this administration as the compassionate conservatives. If there is anyone who deserves compassion in this country, it is our burned children and our destroyed homes and businesses. Is $10.00 per year per firefighter too much too ask our government to help in supporting our quest for a better quality of life?

The budgetary concerns discussed here are only part of the issue. Over the past 12 months FEMA, the parent agency of USFA and NFA has. in our view, expended funds intended by Congress for fire related programs on non-fire programs. Program funds authorized under the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration have been used to support the travel and other expenses of personnel outside the staff of the US Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy. In a recent FEMA report to the House of Representatives, the majority of the National Emergency Training Center administrative and overhead costs were charged to the fire programs, as opposed to an equal sharing of costs with the users of the site. It is important that in order to make maximum use of the limited fire program resources, they must be allocated as intended by Congress.

Finally, we ask that this Committee direct FEMA to place the National Fire Academy back as the training function of the US Fire Administration. When of Congress passed the National Fire Prevention and Control Act (PL 93-498) it was their intent to have the National Fire Academy as a part of the U.S. Fire Administration. By placing the NFA back under USFA, the intent of Congress will be met. Moreover, by realigning these two fire programs, better utilization of precious federal dollars will be achieved.

The IAFC strongly feels that there is a role for the federal government with regard to fire protection in the U.S., and there is much still to do. The U.S. Fire Administration can play a key role in insuring the public interest is better represented in the building code process, by sponsoring research to develop better ways to protect the disabled from fire, and to continue the research in firefighter safety and health, just to name a few. We urge this Congress to restore the original $4 million requested for the U.S. Fire and Administration and the National Fire Academy, and direct FEMA to reallocate those funds, currently being spent in other program areas, back to fire programs as originally intended by Congress. Anything less would be a disservice to the over 1 million volunteer and career firefighters who serve this nation every day, and a disservice to the American public that they protect.

Senator GORE. Thank you.

You know, your recommendation I think is a pretty good one, placing the Academy back under the jurisdiction of the Fire Administration. A lot of people in the fire community believe that the Academy gets less attention because it is under FEMA now.

I doubt that we will do that, though, in this year's bill. But I am going to direct the staff to study doing that in next year's bill.

It was changed, if I am not mistaken, in 1981, when the current administration came in, and they reorganized it a bit and shifted it over to FEMA.

Mr. BAKER. Yes.

Senator GORE. Whoever wins the election this fall, there will be a new administration. It may be newer than it would otherwise be, depending on who wins. It would be a good time, it seems to me, to put it back where it ought to be.

Mr. BAKER. I appreciate that.

Senator GORE. You started off by expressing a sense of frustration that you are here arguing for funding that is so obviously needed. I understand what you are saying.

I want to offer you some reassurance that the legislation that we have introduced and that the Committee is considering does restore the funding that the administration has cut out.

I think that you have eloquently described the importance of the travel stipends for the training that these individuals get. A lot of times we will have a hearing on a disaster that takes place where everything goes wrong and people are demanding action, and it takes a little more mental effort to focus attention on something that goes right.

Mr. BAKER. That's right.

Senator GORE. Here you had an incident where you responded and none of your fire fighters was injured because they received excellent training and they knew what they were doing. It is obvious that the reason they got that training is this program worked well to provide that training.

Mr. BAKER. Absolutely.

Senator GORE. So the disaster that we are talking about here is one that we are trying to prevent taking place.

I interrupted your statement earlier to ask a rhetorical question, really. Why is it that the State of Tennessee, the State of Arkansas, and the State of Mississippi and the other 47 states cannot do all of these things on their own?

Mr. BAKER. We just don't have the tax dollars. We don't have the budgeted dollars to pay for travel.

Senator GORE. There would be a tremendous duplication of effort, too, wouldn't there?

Mr. BAKER. Oh, sure.

Senator GORE. And you would not have the expertise in most states.

Mr. BAKER. The quality training just would not be there. We don't have the facilities, the caliber personnel to teach. We don't have the expertise that we have here at the Academy.

I have had associates of mine in neighboring departments—and, of course, they are all quite smaller than the Memphis department—but they have confided in me that they actually conceal funds in their budget request to have travel and training dollars so they can further their education. For whatever reason, the city fathers elect to frown on training or travel or whatever. Whether it has been misused in the past, I don't know. They actually had moneys to further their education, to be able to attend seminars and to pay for some of the travel expenses. Aside from the stipend program, there are other travel needs and training needs that they have, and they actually have to hide funds to be able to do this.

It just seems atrocious to me, but that is a fact of life.

Senator GORE. It is hard to believe.

Mr. BAKER. Yes, sir.

Senator GORE. The USFA testified today that it is evaluating prototype chemical protective clothing in your department.

Could you describe that effort briefly and comment on its potential?

Mr. BAKER. Yes, sir. I certainly can.

We welcome the opportunity and are very fortunate to have been selected to test these protective chemical suits. It enabled us to go through a gamut of offered fire protective asset suits, so to speak, as described by some people. We went through the best and the worst. Hopefully, through this research project, we have made some recommendations and some selections and we know, and have made recommendations for, what is best for the fire service as far as these protective chemical suits.

We have used them all. In fact, as a spinoff from this same program, our Chief of Apparatus Maintenance has designed a valve to be used to interconnect these suits that are used nationwide, regardless of what suit the city elects to buy. He has a valve that makes the supply air line interchangeable.

A I said, that was a spinoff from the program. We spent almost 1,200 man-hours testing these chemical suits. It was very extensive research. It would not have been possible had we not received a grant from the Fire Administration. We would not have been able to do it.

Senator GORE. You would not have done this research and testing on your own, without the grant?

Mr. BAKER. No, sir, we could not have done it. We would have had to buy the suits on someone else's recommendation and held our breath and hoped they worked.

This way we know what we are doing and we can make the recommendations.

Senator GORE. Well, again, that is a rhetorical question. It is obvious why we need the Federal effort that we have been talking about today.

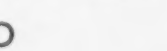
I want to close the hearing this morning by thanking you, Chief, for your leadership in this field and your willingness to travel here and help us understand why this legislation is necessary.

I would like to thank all of our witnesses again. I will leave you with the assurance that this Subcommittee and the full committee here on the Senate side is totally committed to trying to improve our Nation's efforts in fire prevention and firefighting. We will work with you in trying to make certain that legislation this year is adequate to the task that the country faces.

With that, thank you again.

The hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:47 a.m., the Subcommittee adjourned.]



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